

**State Board of Education  
Briefing Paper  
Digital Learning Commons**

**Issue and Definition:** The Digital Learning Commons (DLC) is a non-profit organization established in 2003 to improve access to educational opportunities and learning resources. It provides quality educational materials, online courses, and technology tools for Washington's students and teachers. It provides efficient and affordable access to selected learning resources, online courses, and technology tools to students, teachers, and parents in Washington State. DLC funding comes from local schools, the Washington State Legislature, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation.

**RCW/WAC Cites:** Seed funding was provided by the Legislature. The DLC was created by private organizations.

**State Board of Education Role:** Until recently, (due to not seeking re-election) a former SBE member served on the DLC board. Dr. Judy Margrath-Huge, DLC Chief Executive Officer, has extended an invitation to the SBE for one of our members to continue serving on the DLC board.

**OSPI Role:** The DLC works with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Educational Service Districts to coordinate efforts to ensure maximum benefits to Washington State's students, educators, and parents.

**Effect on School Districts:** Every public middle and high school in Washington State is eligible to join the DLC. Membership is \$6 per student based on October enrollment. The DLC serves schools regardless of geographic location, school size, or district resources. Small, urban, rural, home, tribal, and vocational schools, as well as schools that serve students with special needs, may benefit from DLC membership. Students can take courses not available in their own schools and expand their learning experiences beyond classroom walls. The DLC has grown from serving 35,000 students in 65 schools to now serving 42,000 students in 98 schools.

Currently, 350 courses are offered by six vendors for grades 6-12 in core subjects, credit recovery, electives, Advanced Placement, foreign languages, technical and vocational skills, English as a Second Language, and college credit offerings. Every online course has a certified teacher who reviews each student's progress. Every school with students taking online courses needs a teacher/mentor who provides support at the school to these students.

**Recommendation from SBE Staff:** Staff recommends continued participation with DLC. Meetings of the DLC board are held in February, June, and October.

Pat Eirish  
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